

Introduction to Using the Canon VIXIA HFM31

Video Formats and Approximate Record Times

Memory →	HFM31 Built-in Memory 32 GB
Recording Mode ↓	
MXP (High-quality) 24 Mbps 1920 x 1080 resolution; 30 fps	2h 55m
FXP (High-quality) 17 Mbps 1920 x 1080 resolution; 30 fps	4h 09m
XP+ (High-quality) 12 Mbps 1440 x 1080 resolution; 30 fps	5h 43m
SP (Standard play) 7 Mbps 1440 x 1080 resolution; 30 fps	9h 30m
LP (Long play) 5 Mbps 1440 x 1080 resolution; 30 fps	12h 07m

Recommendations

All formats are HD. The higher the recording time, the lower the quality is.

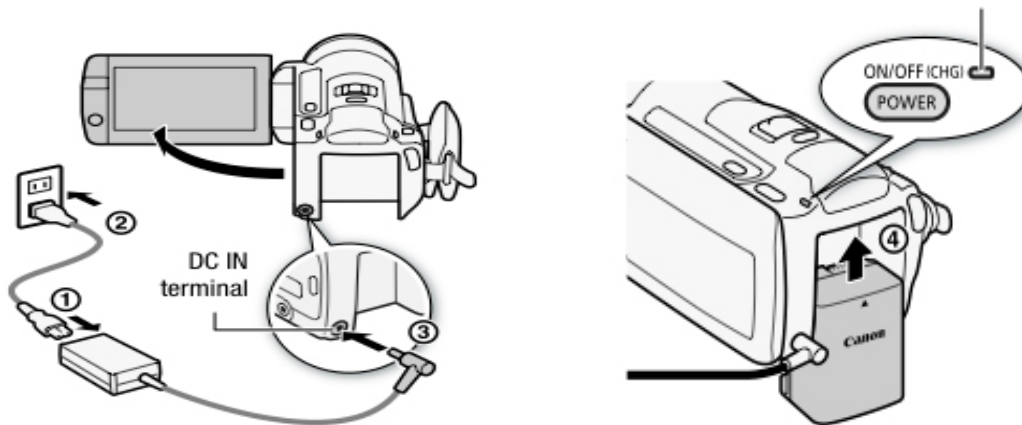
We recommend that you shoot at the FXP setting.

To change the recording mode, hit MENU > middle tab with a film strip > scroll down to Recording Mode > select Mode

Quick Start

Once you have checked out the Vixia for use, the first thing you'll want to do is make sure the battery is charged. First, lock the battery into place on the back of the camera, and then turn the camera on. Open the LCD screen and find the battery icon located on the top right corner of the screen. If the battery is low, plug the power cord (included in the kit) into the DC IN slot on the lower left side of the back of the camera and charge by plugging into a wall outlet. Fully charged batteries should record for approximately 1 hour.

The battery release is located on the inside of the LCD screen on the left of the camera.



Turning the Camera On

To turn the camera on, be sure that it first has a source of power then press the ON/OFF button on the top of the camera marked “POWER”.

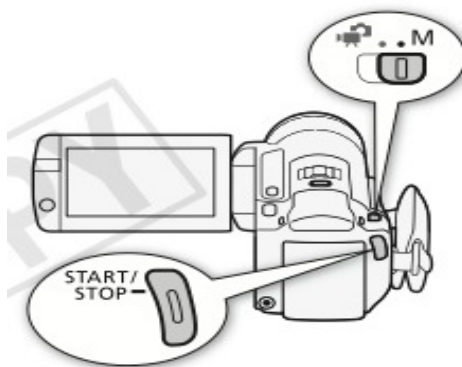
Basic Settings

The Vixia Canon has two modes to choose from: Dual Recording Mode (for simultaneous movie and photo recording) and Manual Recording Mode (which allows you to choose either movie or photo recording). On the top rear end of the camera you will find a switch which toggles between ‘M’ for Manual Recording Mode and an ‘Access’ icon for Dual Recording Mode.

Shooting

When using the Vixia camera be sure to shoot with the LCD screen open. This will allow you to visually confirm what is framed in the shot and also you’ll be able to access features and settings on the camera.

Press the Start/Stop button at the back of the camera to start recording. Press the same button again to stop.



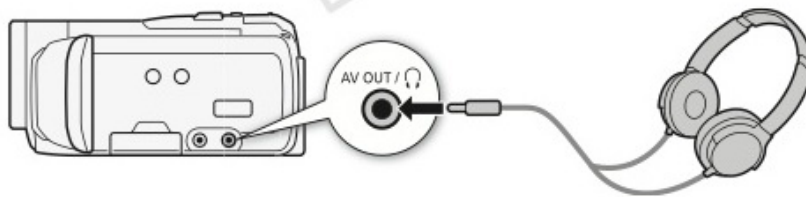
Audio

Always listen with headphones – this is the only way you’ll catch a problem and save your sound!

Accessing the microphone levels should be done in the Manual Recording Mode. Press the FUNC. Menu button, and then choose the “Mic Level” button. To change the audio levels, first select the Manual option and then press on the arrow buttons to make the levels higher or lower. If the levels are hitting the 0 or a red area appears at the right end, then the microphone is too close to the sound or the levels need to be turned down.

Trouble Shoot Suggestion: This camera has an option of having either audio output or AV output from the same port. When no sound or static is coming from the headphones be sure that the Out jack is set to Headphones, NOT AV.

FUNC. > Menu > Settings Tab > AV/Headphones > Headphones



External Microphones

While the camera comes with a built in microphone, most people find they get cleaner sound while using an external microphone. As such, we recommend using an external microphone like a shotgun or Lav microphone available from the IML. (Bluetooth microphones are not available at this time) To test a microphone put on headphones and snap your fingers approximately 3 inches away from the mic. Do not tap the mic to test, no matter what you’ve seen in movies. This is bad and can damage the microphone.

First, plug the small audio cable from the audio box into the small red ‘mic’ jack on the camera located on the left side of the camera under the LCD screen. Then check the audio switches on the back of the audio box, and make sure they’re set to mic, NOT line. If you record sound when it’s on the “line” input, it will be distorted and unusable. Then, plug the XLR cable coming from the microphone into the audio box using the three pronged socket on the front of the audio box. Turn on the microphone and plug the headphones into the camera’s headphone jack, located on the left side of the camera (open the LCD screen). Use the headphones to check your audio and make sure your levels are adequate. You can adjust the level of the mic on the audio box.

If you are only using one microphone plugged into the ‘RIGHT’ audio jack, you may flip the switch on the back of the audio box from ‘S’ (stereo) to ‘M’ (mono). Doing this will record the signal from your mic onto both the left and right tracks.

Be careful not to record your audio at too high a level, or clipping (distortion) will occur – this is NOT fixable in post.

Adjusting the placement of the microphone can be an easy way to get better sound.



Advanced Settings

To control white balance, microphone levels, focus and other features first be sure to set the camera to Manual Recording Mode. Choose either movie or photo recording by pressing the button on the bottom right corner of the LCD screen. This will toggle between the two options. Then press the "FUNC." button in the upper left corner of the LCD screen to view and edit more settings.

White Balance









White balancing your camera ensures that all your color tones will be correct (i.e., the reds will be red, etc.) To do this, the camera balances based on what you select as "white", and sets the other tones accordingly. To access the different white balance settings be sure to first set the camera to Manual Recording. Then press the

“FUNC” button on the upper left corner of the LCD screen. Choose WB for White balance. AWB is the automatic state of the light exposure. There are other presets included in the VIXIA camera, which include Daylight, Shade, Cloudy, Fluorescent, Fluorescent H, Tungsten, and a custom WB.

If there is a shift in light or tonality while you are filming, the camera will noticeably correct it, resulting in color changes in the middle of your shot.

The procedure for a custom WB, which is always the most accurate, is as follows: Choose the custom WB option. Then find a completely white surface (a sheet of blank paper works well) and zoom in on the surface until it fills the entire screen. Here should be no visible color than the white object; otherwise, the reading will not be accurate. While doing this press the “Set Balance” button on the LCD screen. Once the icon has stopped flashing in the middle of the screen you will see adjustment in the color of the paper, depending on how it differs from the previous settings.

Options (* Default value)

- [ **Automatic**]* The camcorder automatically sets the white balance for natural looking colors.
- [ **Daylight**] To record outdoors on a bright day.
- [ **Shade**] To record in shaded places.
- [ **Cloudy**] To record on a cloudy day.
- [ **Fluorescent**] To record under warm white, cool white or warm-white-type (3-wavelength) fluorescent lighting.
- [ **Fluorescent H**] To record under daylight or daylight-type (3-wavelength) fluorescent lighting.
- [ **Tungsten**] To record under tungsten and tungsten-type (3-wavelength) fluorescent lighting.
- [ **Custom WB**] Use the custom white balance setting to make white subjects appear white under colored lighting.

Manual Focus

By default the camera will be set to automatic focus. You can override the automatic focus with a manual focus option, thus being able to create rack focus shots.

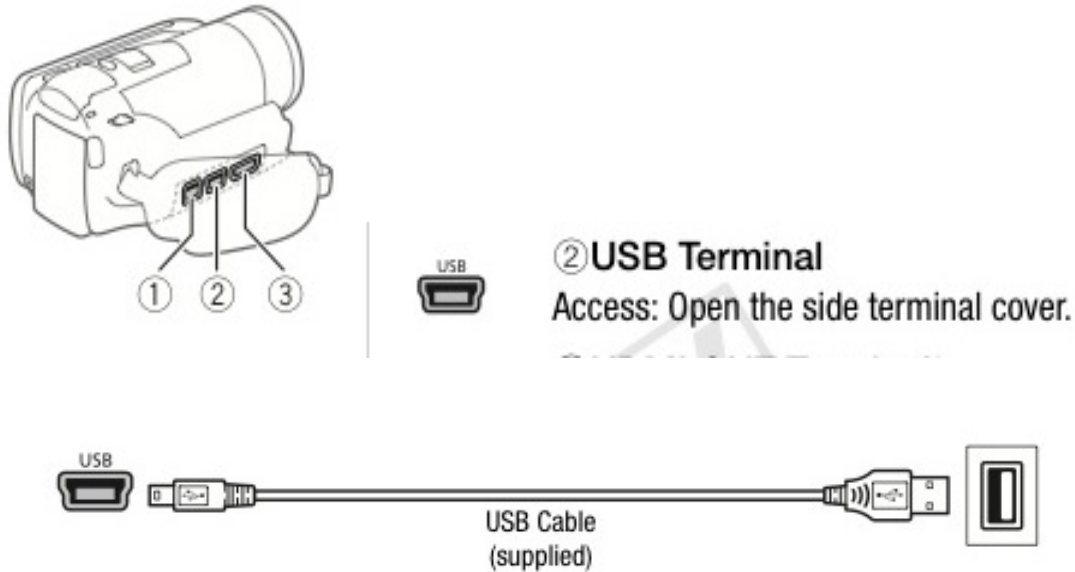
Once in the Manual Recording Mode, choose the FUNC option from the LCD screen. Then press the Focus Button. The MF button at the bottom of the screen indicates if the Manual Focus is on. If on the orange icon will appear and so will two more icons, the mountain for objects far away and a person icon for objects close up. By pressing and holding the icons you can change the focus within your frame.

Manual Exposure

By default the camera will be set to automatic exposure. Similar to Manual Focus you can alter the settings within the FUNC to suit your needs. In the Exposure setting press the M at the bottom of the screen to turn on the manual function and make the orange icon appear. On the left of the LCD screen a gauge appears which you can scroll up or down to change the exposure of the scene.

Importing to Your Computer

Switch the camera on, and locate the USB port revealed on under the flap of the right side of the camera. Plug the USB cable included in the kit into the mini USB input, and plug the other end into the USB slot on your computer.



The camera will prompt you on the LCD screen to choose the type of connection. Select the “USB Connect” option. You’re now connected!

You should see a ‘No Name’ disc image appear on your desktop. DO NOT OPEN OR ALTER THE ‘NO NAME’ DISC.

Once you have connected the camera to the computer, simply launch Final Cut Pro.

Name and save your scratch discs appropriately (See other IML Support documentation or staff for instruction).

From the FILE menu select ‘Log and Transfer’ option (NOT log and capture). FCP should automatically detect the camera and load its contents into the preview screen. You will see a list on the left side of the Log and Transfer Window of all the clips on the camera. If you like, at this point you can select each clip one by one and give it a unique name, and even set in and out points if you only want to import certain parts. All of these values are input on the right side of the log and transfer window. Once you have entered any appropriate criteria for your clips, you can drag them into the ‘queue’ area to begin importing them to your computer (they will be imported into your capture folder as determined when you set your scratch disc at

the outset of this process). If you simply wish to import everything on the camera, you can select all of your clips at once and drag them into the queue.



(FINAL CUT PRO – LOG AND TRANSFER SCREEN)

This transfer process includes an automatic recoding of your footage using the Apple Pro Res encoder, by default. When you begin working with the transferred HD footage in a FCP sequence, it will be important that your sequence settings match your clip settings. When you start with a fresh sequence, FCP will offer to automatically adjust its settings to match those of your first clip inserted into the timeline.

Backing Up Your Work

Once you return the camera to our office, we will erase the hard drive, and your footage will only exist in whatever location and form you have chosen. It is **HIGHLY** recommended that you always keep your priceless footage in at least **TWO** places at all times. It would be a good idea to copy the entire contents of the 'No Name' drive into a secure location, separate and distinct from the drive you will be using for your primary work.

When in doubt, come and talk to us!

Lab Techs are available for one on one consultation and in depth camera tutorial sessions.